

Big Sky Libraries

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Montana State Library [MSL]

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Fall Workshops a Success

MSL hosted 107 librarians and trustees who came to Lewistown for a two-day workshop in September. The participants – 67 public (including 5 trustees), 23 school, 4 school/public, 4 special, and 9 academic librarians— attended sessions on Basic Interlibrary Loan, Beginning LaserCat, Advanced LaserCat, Beginning Reference



Fall workshops were well attended.

Service, Electronic Database Training, Planning for Results, and Information Resource Management. Participants worked hard, but having fun was also part of the schedule. Tours of historic homes, a local church, and the Lewistown Public Library were available, as well as dinner at the country club. Even while unwinding from the workshop sessions, librarians were still visiting and sharing information about what they learned.

MSL would like to thank all the participants, the presenters, and the many Lewistown locals, including the library staff, historical society members and chamber of commerce, and the Library Development Team for making the event a success.

Summer Institute 2000

Plans are progressing for Montana's first library summer institute. The event will be held on the campus of Rocky Mountain College in Billings the week of June 5, 2000. The Summer Institute will bring 50 Montana librarians and library staff together for an intense week of formal training and informal networking. The Institute will be funded with Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant money that will pay for participants training and accommodation expenses. So, if a week of learning, dorm life, and sharing ideas with fellow librarians sounds like summer fun to you, plan now to apply. The Summer Institute 2000 application process will begin early next year.

Calendar

For more information on these and other Montana Library events, visit our web calendar: <http://msl.state.mt.us/calendar.html>

Dec. 2 - Montana Geographic Information Services Council

Dec. 7 - MSL Commission Meeting, Helena

A Word From Our State Librarian



E-Rate

Executive summary of this article:

Please apply, its good for your community.

Will the E-rate forms ever be that succinct? We are three years into the program and although the political dust has settled somewhat, in some circles the very mention of the program makes hackles rise. Some of the critics are proposing different funding mechanisms and administrative bodies.

Everyone agrees that the program had a rocky start with cumbersome and complex forms to complete and a long wait between submission and the receipt of discounts. We wondered whether the paper work was worth the discount. However, I have noticed a shift in attitude toward the program among public librarians. Applying for the E-rate has become a regular part of your job. Perhaps a time-consuming and, may I say, tedious part, but your assessment is that the work is worth it.

So, what can I possibly add to the plethora of e-rate information? Well, some of you have not applied. Please do so. If the process puts you off, MSL can help you, as well as your peers, some of whom are hardened E-Rate veterans. Some of you are not applying for enough. I encourage you to work with the MSL technology consultants to consider moving up to a direct connection from a dial-up (modem) connection. I understand that the monthly charges can be a big bite out of your already small budget, but the E-rate can help you afford the connection that your community deserves. The Gates Foundation grants can also help with the initial purchase of equipment. Remember as well to apply for discounts for POTS – plain old telephone service.

My favorite question to ask of all programs and services is “what difference has this made?” We do not yet have the data to answer this question about the E-Rate program. In year two, public libraries in Montana received approximately \$90,000 in discounts. This is a relatively small amount when compared to other states or even the discounts for Montana’s schools. However, I know that an \$90,000 increase in state aid would be a battle in our legislature, as legislators struggle to allocate Montana’s sparse resources. Any help to your small budgets makes a difference. An increase in access to information resources makes a difference to your communities. How much difference remains to be seen, but the E-Rate program is delivering for Montana.



Karen's Schedule:

Dec. 2 - Montana Geographic Information Services Council

Dec. 7 - MSL Commission Meeting, Helena

Dec. 8-10 - Western Council of State Librarians Meeting, Phoenix

Dec. 23 - Montana Geographic Information Services Council

Jan. 15 - Montana Library Day

Jan. 15 - LSTA Advisory Council

[tentative]

Montana Library Network Update

MLN Director Bruce Newell has been traveling Montana, gathering librarians' thoughts on MLN's direction. A summary is online at: <http://msl.state.mt.us/mln/revisedplan1.pdf>.

The New Western Horizons in Resource Sharing meeting, held in Billings, October 14, was a great success. The meeting's purpose was to identify areas of possible cooperation between western state and provincial libraries. Many thanks to Ann Joslin, from the Idaho State Library, for her work facilitating this ambitious meeting.

Representatives from state and provincial libraries agreed to work toward the following goals:

- 1) Creating a forum for sharing information between western state and provincial libraries.
- 2) Establishing reciprocal ILL borrowing agreement and building a western OCLC GAC.
- 3) Cooperatively ensuring quality and regionally applicable professional library education.
- 4) Working cooperatively to purchase networked library materials and services.

(Continued on page 6)

Montana Birds on the Web

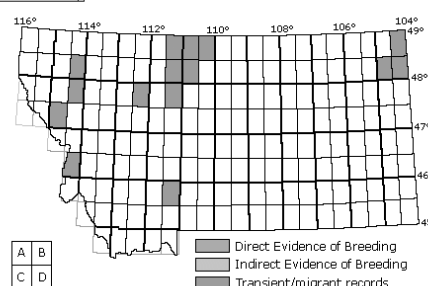
"How many different kinds of hummingbirds are there in Montana?" "Is it possible I saw a Snowy Owl yesterday?"

Since 1975, various editions of the publication P. D. Skaar's Montana Bird Distribution have provided answers to questions such as these. This information is now available, interactively, on the Montana Natural Heritage Program's web site.



The Montana Natural Heritage Program helps keep track of Montana areas that harbor rare species or outstanding biological features. For an update on the Heritage Program's current projects, surveys and studies, biological discoveries, and new capabilities, take a look at the first issue of our newsletter, "Optimolocus," available from our home page (<http://nris.state.mt.us/mtnhp>).

Quarter Latilong Distribution 1993 - 1998



Example: location information for Snowy Owl.

Go to <http://nris.state.mt.us>, then to the Natural Heritage Program. From there, navigate to "Animals," then "Search." Select a "species information query," you can highlight the species and retrieve a map showing areas in the state where it's been observed. Or, select a "latilong" (a one-degree latitude-longitude block) and retrieve a list of birds observed in that area.

BCR Offers Workshops

BCR will present four workshops at the Montana State University, Bozeman, featuring Michael Sauers as the instructor. Some workshops have prerequisites. Cost/workshop: \$85 for BCR members/\$140 nonmembers (\$10 early registration discount). Contact Stephanie Jauregui, BCR (800)397-1552, sjauregu@bcr.org or register on-line: www.bcr.org.

- Internet Search Engines, February 14, 2000, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Web Design II: Tables, Forms & Frames, February 16, 2000, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Web Design III: Advanced HTML, CSS and Scripts, February 17, 2000, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Training for Technology Trainers, February 8, 2000, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

MSL Materials

Disaster Response and Planning for Libraries. Miriam B. Kahn, ALA, 1998, Call # 025.82 KAHN: This book teaches you to "survive, revive and thrive" in disaster situations. Each chapter presents an aspect of disaster response and planning. Response sections provide suggestions for immediate actions to take based upon the extent and type of disaster, and methods of preservation. Prevention sections give examples such as storing backup materials offsite. The planning chapter covers the steps and considerations important in the development of a plan. Several chapters have case studies from real disasters and appendices have checklists and forms. The bibliography provides a list of articles, videos and books.

MSL has bibliographies on: Resources for Finding Distance Learning Programs, Grant Resource Materials, Internet, Library Safety and Security, Videos on Library Issues, Training Related Resources, and Resources for Library Trustees. Contact: 1-800-338-5087.

MLA Grants

Applications are now available for MLA Professional Development Grants and for MLA Conference Travel Grants for 2000. Grant criteria and applications are available on Wired-MT and in the December issue of the MLA Focus. Deadlines for applying for grants are November 30, 1999, and March 31, 2000. The deadline for MLA Travel Grants is March 10, 2000. Contact: Liza McClelland, Bozeman Public Library, 406-582-2402, fax 406-582-2424, email: lizamc@mtlib.org.

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon



Bonnie Heidel, narrator and
Gil Gilbertson, monitor, winners of the

On September 16, over eighty MSL Volunteers were honored at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. The theme was "Our Volunteers Do It By the Book." Stephen Prine, from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in Washington D.C., greeted, and thanked the Volunteers, and spoke of the importance of local volunteers to talking book libraries. Prine said that without volunteer services, such as the Telephone Pioneers, the blind, low vision, physically handicapped, and reading disabled citizens of Montana would not receive these services.

Mrs. Lois DuPuis from Polson, who received the 1999 Montana Blue Cross and Blue Shield "Ageless Hero" award from Governor Racicot, and a National "Ageless Hero" award from former President George Bush, was the keynote speaker. Lois, a patron of the Montana Talking Book Library [MTBL] for 10 years, and an active volunteer in her church and community, helped to start the Polson chapter of the Montana Association for the Blind and is its current president. She is a member of the Salish-Kootenai Tribe. Lois spoke of how much volunteers mean to her and other MTBL patrons. She said, "I don't know how we would get along without the talking books."

Stephen Prine presented plaques to Telephone Pioneers Howard and Gladys Bloom for dedication and service in repairing machines and cassettes. Millie Huxley received a special Volunteer Appreciation Award "for her efficient, quietly caring, generous and dedicated service," from Darlene Staffeldt, MSL's Statewide Library Resources Program Manager. Christie Briggs, Regional Librarian, MTBL presented the 1999 Recording Team of the Year Award to Bonnie Heidel and Gil Gilbertson.

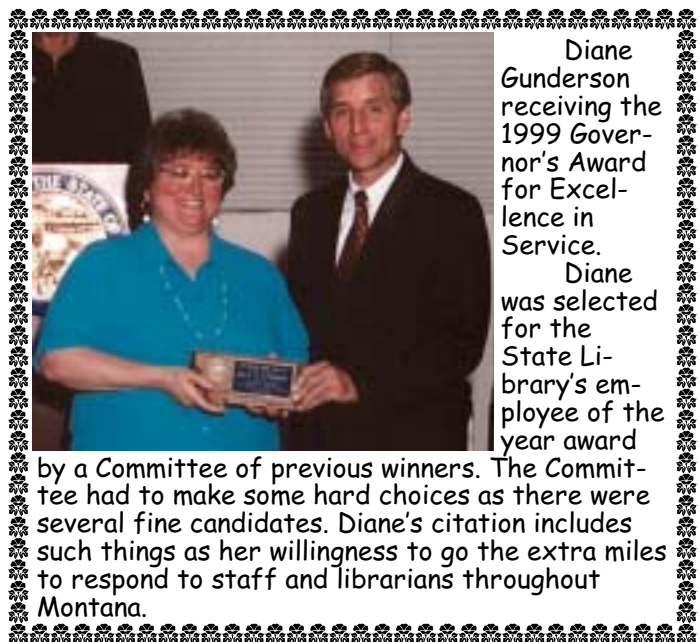
Library staff made gifts for fifteen volunteers. Mike Schulz, MSL Commission Chair, presented letters signed by Governor Racicot to thirteen Youth Volunteers. The letter read, in part, "Your many hours of service in helping the citizens of Montana takes compassion, your special talents and a willing heart."

Notes From MSL

Commission news: On October 13 the Commission held their business meeting at the Parmly-Billings Library and took the following actions:

- Approved changes in the draft public library standards rules and approved the final version.
- Finished the policy review process.
- Accepted four federation annual reports
- Approved a draft of the administrative rules to implement the new federation law
- Adopted a preferred future statement for the Library and Information Services Department and prioritized a list of department goals.

The Commission will meet in Helena on Tuesday, December 7.



Diane Gunderson receiving the 1999 Governor's Award for Excellence in Service.

Diane was selected for the State Library's employee of the year award

by a Committee of previous winners. The Committee had to make some hard choices as there were several fine candidates. Diane's citation includes such things as her willingness to go the extra miles to respond to staff and librarians throughout Montana.

Gates Foundation Schedules Workshops

The Gates Foundation will hold its grant writing workshop via the MetNet Video Conference System on Tuesday, January 11, 2000.

All public libraries will receive workshop invitations from the Gates Foundation in November. The Foundation will provide individual library applications and related information at the workshops.

Librarians are free to attend the workshop at any of the following sites. However, once you select a site, you must attend the workshop at that site because your application, which is available only at the workshop, is individualized for your library.

The State Library has no other information on the Gates Foundation Grants at this time. We will send updates on Wired-Mt as they become available.

Video conference sites are:

- Billings, MSU at Billings, 1500 N 30th St. (Special Education Building, Rm #162).
- Bozeman, MSU, EPS building, So. 7th & Grant, Burns Center Rm #103. Helena, DPHHS, 111 Sanders Street, Lower Level Auditorium.
- Kalispell, FVCC, 777 Grandview Drive, Learning Resource Cntr, Rm #120.
- Great Falls, College of Technology, 2100 16th Ave. So, Rm #147, Miles City, MCC, 2715 Dickenson St., Rm #106.
- Havre, MSU - Northern, 300 11th St. W, Hagener Science Center, Rm #202.
- Missoula, UM, Corner of Arthur & Eddy, Gallagher Building, Rm #108.
- Culbertson, 818 2nd Ave East.
- Glendive, 202 Prospect Drive.

Gates Foundation Updates Eligibility Criteria

The Gates Foundation uses its own methodology to determine if public library buildings are eligible to apply for a grant. This methodology employs 1990 poverty census data. It determines a library building's service population by the type of area the library serves and calculates the population within a five-mile radius for rural libraries, a three-mile radius for urban fringe libraries and a one-mile radius for urban libraries.

If the methodology shows that a library building serves a community that has 10% or more members in poverty, the library is eligible to apply for a cash grant from the Foundation.

When the State Library made the state application to the Foundation at the end of 1998, the Foundation provided us with a list of eligible libraries using preliminary poverty statistics based on the Florida State University's study and a one mile radius. The Foundation has refined the data gathered in that study and assigned libraries to their correct category (i.e. rural, urban fringe, or urban).

This refinement has changed the poverty designation for Montana libraries. In November, the Gates Foundation will mail workshop invitations to all Montana libraries. See the article next to this one for dates and locations of the workshops. Applications will be passed out at the workshops that contain eligibility information for each library building.

The State Library does not have a list of eligible public library buildings.

Suzanne Reymer, one of MSL's Statewide Technology Librarians meets with the staff of Rosebud County Library.

Left to Right: Cathy Byron, Suzanne Reymer, Cheryl Hesser, Susan Martin, Meriem Ungefug.





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Spotlight: John Hinshaw, Computer Specialist for Natural Heritage Program



John Hinshaw, Computer
Specialist for Natural
Heritage Program

John has worked for the Montana Natural Heritage Program since July of 1994. He wears many hats in the program, from database design that enables the Heritage Program manage thousands of species observation records, to map making, to software and hardware installations. As of January 1, 1999 he has been working as a half-time NT Administrator for NRIS.

John has been married to his wife, Alice, for 31 years. They have two grown daughters, one in Polson, the other in Spokane, and 4 grandchildren, who John says "are perfect,

of course." John and Alice owned and operated a dairy and hog farm in the Mission Valley for 17 years before going to college with their daughters. In 1994 John graduated from the University of Montana with a degree in Computer Science and Alice graduated from the University of Montana Law School with a Law degree. They moved to Helena that summer and have pursued their new careers and hobbies. John loves to do woodworking and Alice enjoys quilt-making.

MLN Update (Continued from page 2)

- 5) Adopting standards-based means of making regional non-bibliographic resources available and more uniformly searchable.
- 6) Investigating possible funding sources for western multi-state/province cooperative projects.

Contact Bruce Newell at (406) 444-9816 or bnewell@state.mt.us.